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MATEBIAN NEWS

United Nations Move Further on East Timor

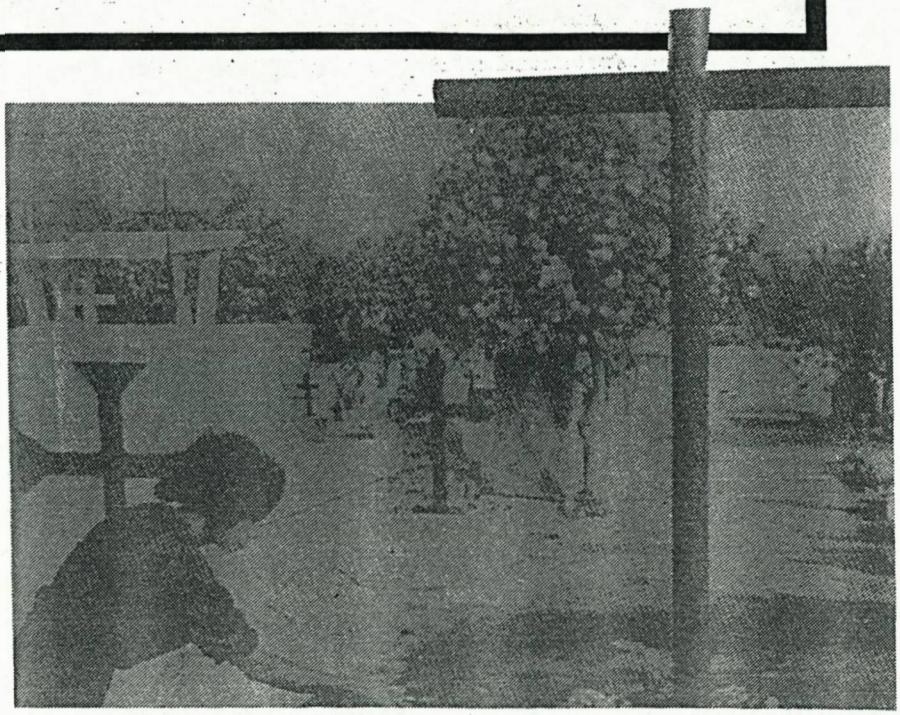

photo: The Weekend Australian

The last resolution passed on East Timor by the General Assembly of the United Nations was in 1982. That resolution was passed on the 4th November, with a margin of 50 to 46, and 50 abstentions. It was a result of lengthy corridor negotiations led by the former Portuguese colonies and Timorese diplomats. That resolution charged the UN Secretary-General to use his good offices to initiate discussions "with all parties directly concerned" and to report the outcome to the General Assembly.

Since than, Mr Perez de Cuellar, the predecessor of Dr Boutros-Ghali, tried what he could to bring, at least, the governments of Indonesia and Portugal to the negotiation table in order to find that sought solution. In the early stage, the Indonesian government used every possible cards to abort these negotiations. The most common argument were: the resistance was nothing but a bunch of bandits, that Portugal abandoned East Timor and the Timorese "chose" to be independent through integration into Indonesia. And Indonesia used Australian governments to lay credibility to these arguments. This marriage between Australian and Indonesian governments using East Timor as the "wedding ring" was stamped with the signing of the Timor Gap Treaty.

However, the campaign developed by the Timorese activists and the solidarity movement did not allow the Indonesians to get away with their crimes. Intensive human rights campaign forced the Indonesian government's supporters to advise them to open up East Timor so that what they say can be testified as the truth. In January 1989, Suharto passed a decree to open up East Timor and release it from the classification of special security zone. The opening up was not extended to all the 13 districts. Only seven districts, mostly in the western side of East Timor were "opened" for tourists. Many political tourists - to use indonesian terminology - flew to East Timor to search for truth. They found out that they were not free to travel. INTEL - Indonesian intelligence - kept on following them making it difficult to speak to the Timorese freely. Nevertheless, the Clandestine Network of the Timorese Resistance was able to get the message across and the solidarity movement in co-ordination with the Timorese activists managed to force Jakarta into a corner. Direct testimony by hundreds of Timorese who managed to get out from East Timor, reinforced the human rights abuse claims forcing Indonesia to adopt dangerous tactics.

One of the most dangerous tactics was the acceptance of a visit to East Timor by a Portuguese Parliamentary Delegation, which was to

mentary Delegation, which was to take place on the 4th of November 1991, a week before the massacre of Sta Cruz. The tension generated by this aborted visit led to the massacre of Sta Cruz and the current circumstances which the Indonesian government finds it so difficult to supplant. An effective leadership of the Timorese National Resistance architected and nurtured by Xanana Gusmao, combined with a slow but steady increase in support for East Timor worldwide, has been able to defeat the millions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of Indonesian troops.

The success for East Timor is translated now into the acceptance by the UN that a complete focus on demilitarisation of East Timor is the only way to reduce the abuse of human rights. The Secretary-General of UN, Dr Boutros-Ghali, in his recent report to the General Assembly of the UN on the question of East Timor, he stated that improvement in human rights is *sine qua non* to finding a solution for East Timor. Such statement has defined the road to what Ali Alatas himself said "a just, comprehensive and internationally accepted solution for East Timor". ■

United Nations: Secretary-General Report dismisses Indonesian claims

The Secretary-General of UN, Dr Boutros-Ghali, presented his report to the UNCHR, in its fiftieth session, late February. The report consists of "an analytical compilation of all information received from, among others, Governments and inter-governmental and non-governmental groups organisations."

The resolution 1993/97, passed in the forty-ninth session of the UNCHR entitled "Situation in East Timor", requested the Secretary-General to present a comprehensive report on the question of East Timor. This was an approach adopted by NGO's in an attempt to give the Secretary-General some breeding-space to publish the reports presented to him by his special envoys, namely Mr Amos Wako who went to East Timor twice with the official diplomatic title of "personal envoy", once soon after the massacre of Sta. Cruz, and later during the trial of Xanana Gusmao by the Indonesian kangaroo court in Dili. His reports were believed to be damaging to Indonesian occupation of East Timor. Therefore, if the Secretary-General was to publish it without being requested, it would be seen by Jakarta as playing politics favouring the Timorese camp. The content of this report justifies the expectations expressed in the past by several NGO's, including the London-based TAPOL and Sydney-based ETRA.

Regarding the trial of Xanana, the report stressed that it was curious to note *"how the access (to East Timor) was facilitated at the beginning of the trial (of Xanana Gusmao) and how it was obstructed in its final phase, when Xanana Gusmao had given clear signals that he was going to denounce the political manipulation of the entire trial (...).*

"access to East Timor remain in fact restricted"

Continuing on the question of access to East Timor, the report said that *"access to East Timor remained in fact restricted (Indonesia continues for instance to reject access to the territory by Amnesty International), making it almost impossible the effective monitoring of human rights. Access to foreign journalists was tightly circunscribed (...). Delegations from the European Parliament, the United States Congress and the Australian Parliament were refused authorisation to visit East Timor."*

These statements have serious implications in terms of the status of East Timor in the UN. East Timor is classified as a non-selfgoverning territory and is registered in the UN Decolonisation Committee. Although Portugal is juridically the legal Administrative Power, Indonesia exerts a de facto control over the territory. In pratice, UN has been treating Indonesia as the de facto coloniser and East Timor as the colony.

According to international law, the colonial power must report to the Secretary-General of UN the situation of the colony. Indonesia has been trying to escape this responsibility by classifying East Timor as part of Indonesia. (cont. pg.3)

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UN refuses to recognise this illegal act. By asserting that access to East Timor remained in fact restricted is a statement which can have broader implication in the way UN deals with Indonesia in the question of East Timor.

Claims often made by the Indoensian and Australian governments that the trial was open to the international scrutiny has certainly been fully dismissed by this report.

Copies of the report can be obtained from the East Timor Information & Documentation Centre

News in brief

- Police officer charged - a Timorese police officer was charged and sentenced for 18 months imprisonment for giving sanctuary to Xanana Gusmao before he was captured. Augusto Pereira, a police officer working for Indonesia was the latest Timorese to be given a sentence as a result of Xanana's capture.

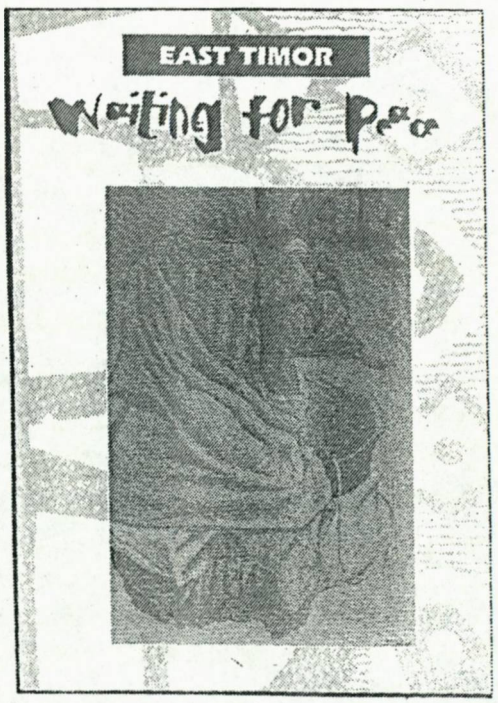
  According to Jakarta Post, the sentence was six months shorter than that demanded by the prosecutor because the judge took into account the dedication of Augusto to the police service.

- Indonesian Human Rights group appeals for sanction against Indonesia - INFIGHT, a Jakarta-based Indonesian Human Rights group, appealed to Swedish Parliament to "relate its economic aid to human rights and democratisation in Indonesia". In that sense, INFIGHT asked the Swedish Parliament to postpone economic aid to Indonesia until Indonesia ractifies all principles of the Universal Declaration on Human rights into the existing legislation in the Indonesian political system.

- Timorese priest tortured: a Timorese priest called Sancho Amaral based in Lospalos was arrestedamd tortured by the Indonesian military. He later was forced to sign a statement that he was well treated. His arrest was connected to the expected visit to East Timor by Bishop Hilton Deaken. On the 21 February last, another priest , Father Domingos Soares was arrested for interrogation. His arrest was connected to the launch of John Pilger's film.

- Catholic Bishop defends the Timorese: a Melbourne-based bishop, Bishop Hilton Deaken, denounced Marcus Wanandi, the Indonesian priest who gave an interview to the ABC journalist who visited East Timor as part of a Foreign Correspondent guided tour. In his interview Marcus Wanandi claimed to be the witness of a "no second massacre", and that he was the witness of a 19-dead-only massacre of November 12 1991.

  Bishop Deaken said, Wanandi told him during his last visit to East Timor that he was wasting his time talking with the Timorese because *"they have just come out of the trees".* ■



EDITORIAL

Western hypocrysy? Yes.But, can Pilger's film change anything?

The newly released film by the Australian journalist John Pilger, film director David Munroe and cameraman Max Stahl, "Death of a Nation: The Timor Conspiracy" is certain to force the Indonesian government to refine new ways to hide their crimes committed against the people of East Timor over the last 18 years. The tag of "Fretilin propaganda" or GPKs, or even "desappeared people "' is no longer accepted in the UN as a valid argument. Since the November 12 1991massacre, killing and, therefore, demilitarisation are the main focus.

One important element exposed by the Pilger's film is one of a conspiracy between the Indonesian government and the governments of Australia, USA and UK. Conspiracy in the sense that in spite of all the detailed information made available to these governments, their leaders have been pretending that they know nothing about the killings in East Timor. Pilger exposed this conspiracy in a way which leaves very little room for the Indonesian government and its western friends to escape their own respective responsibilities. He went to East Timor, filmed in the Baucau Flamboyant Hotel which is famous as a torture centre, set on a bed there and read an excerpt of a torture manual of the indonesian military; he went to Taci Tolu in the outskirts of Dili, also famous as a burial ground for many Timorese killed either in the torture or indiscriminately as a result of protests, and read a letter of a priest describing the genocidal process in East Timor. He filmed Kraras, a village where the population of four hundred people was wiped out by the Indonesian military for suspicion of their link with the guerillas; the village of widows was also filmed. These two elements epitomise the process of genocide in East Timor.

To furhter expose the western hypocrisy, Pilger interviewed a CIA senior officer formerly posted in Jakarta. This CIA officer spoke about how much former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former President Gerald Ford were involved in the Indonesian plan to take over East Timor. Some of his final words were moving. He said that the ego of Kissinger and Suharto got on the way of East Timor freedom to leave the way they want; why don't they leave this people alone?

From Australia, Pilger managed to create an indirect debate between two arch rivals on the issue of East Timor. James Dunn, former Australian consul for East Timor and author of the book "Timor: A People Betrayed", and Richard Woolcot, former Australian ambassador to Indonesia and defender of Indonesian/ Australian policy on East Timor. It was clear that Woolcot did not know how to defend his arguments. Richard Woolcot is known to be a defender that the 200.000 people died in East Timor as a result of the Indonesian invasion and consequent occupation is a fabrication of Fretilin and anti-indonesian "racists". Janes Dunn, on the other hand, proved that the population of East Timor was about 688 thousand before the indonesian invasion, with a rate of increase of 2% per year. After that, the indonesian census suggested that the population in 1989, is about 650 thousand only. That means a loss of population which, in proportional terms, is even greater then Kampuchea under the Khmer Rouge.

The sale of arms by UK to Indonesia was high in Pilger's film. The film managed to show clearly how sickening the hypocrisy of the west can get to. The sale of Hawks aeroplanes with the tag of "training" aircraft but, nevertheless, there was a common knowledge that the aircrafts are adaptable and can be turn into a very effective aircraft for bombardments. And, of course, witnesses testify that the aircrafts were used in East Timor, especially in the period of 1978, when Mount Matebian was bombed for weeks, creating starvation and death like the Timorese never experienced before.

Having said all these, what can this film do to change the situation?

One must look at this film in the context of all the material already available and all the work being done in this past 18 years; this film is a synthesis of a genocide which all these work has been depicting but never once was taken as "fact" by the western powers. Will it happen now? If one want to be optimistic, one can say that the film which was seen in the Human Rights Commission in its second working day, combined with eye witnesses, with the damaging 25 pages report produced by the Secretary-General of the UN, Dr Boutros-Ghali, will produce in that forum a very

powerful reaction condemning the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. A sceptic would argue that, even if this is to be true, Indonesia can always get away with it by keeping on with hollow arguments to buy time and hope that the pressure will fade away.

However, if one looks at the facts since the massacre of November 12, 1991, the Timorese camp has been successful in forcing Indonesian government to enter into real concessions. For example, last year, Jakarta was forced to sign an agreement whereby it will be forced to allow NGO's and Human Rights groups to enter East Timor to study the situation. It is true that this has not been implemented. The truth of the matter is that, provided that the Human Rights agencies enter East Timor freely, the truth that will come out after that will be impossible for Indonesia to sustain, no matter how many millions of dollars and how many hundreds of thousands of red berets Jakarta has; if Pilger's film ''Death of a Nation: the Timor Conspiracy'' can catalyse that, a historical victory has already been achieved by the people of East Timor, because...the next step will be easier! ■

International Human Rights Competition

Congratulations to Greg Jones, a Sydney Barrister who was selected to participate in the International Human Rights Competition to be held on March 20 1994, in Caen, France. It is run by the city of Caen under the authority of Senator Mayor, Jean-Marie Girault,founder and president of the Memorial Museum in collaboration with the Caen Bar Association.

This competition is on its 5th year. Twelve lawyers will have the opportunity to present a summary of plea on behalf of their chosen subject. Greg Jones will present his summary on behalf of Xanana Gusmao and East Timor at the competition.

Our best wishes and good luck in the competition. Your effort will once again bring Xanana Gusmao and East Timor in international forum!

Inform yourself about East Timor.
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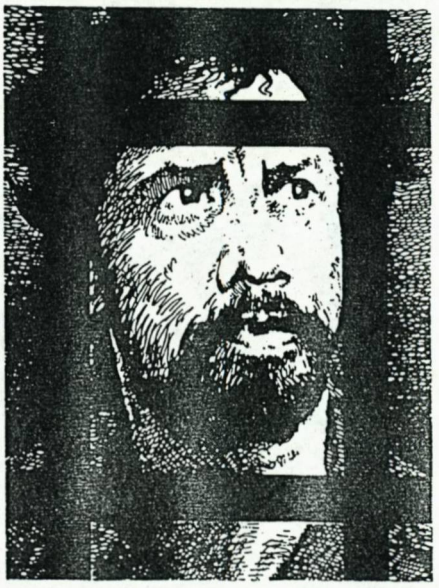


Matebian News is a publication of
East Timor Information &
Documentation Centre/CNRM
supported by ETRA
Co-Ordinator: Ines Almeida
Working team: Ceu Britess-Pereira, Lola Reis,
Geraldo Magno, Neca Brites, Agio Pereira,
Bernardo Reis & Mize Lemos-Magno.
P.O. Box 481, FAIRFIELD NSW 2165
Ph: (02) 728 7395; Fax: (02) 726 6319

ETRA INC

EAST TIMOR RELIEF ASSN. INC.

East Timor Relief Association

a brief activity report

On 19 February last, ETRA brought the film of John Pilger "Death of a Nation: the Timor Conspiracy" to the Timorese community in NSW. The hall of Bonnyrigg Primary School was rented for that purpose. About 200 members of the community attended the two hour session, including half an hour TV news clips covering the last five days main news coverage.

Food and drinks were made available in the bar, an information desk was set up to make the latest information available to the community, and all adults (over 16 years of age) were asked to contribute with $4 to cover the costs (eg. renting of the film projector and screen, renting of the hall and other general expenses). The community responded very well to the organisational needs. After the event was successfully carried, it was reported that all the costs incurred from this important activity were covered with the money obtained from the entrance and the bar; a profit of $199.40 was recorded plus $29.50 donations for the information desk.

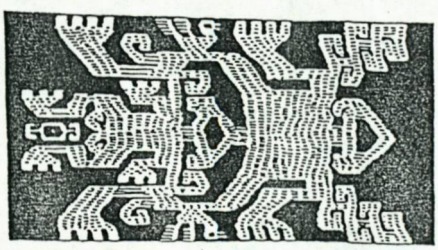
A report was written in Portuguese for ETRA's members in NSW detailing these activities and some other brief news obtained from the electronic media. A copy of this report can be obtained from ETRA's office in Parramatta.

Opening of the exhibition at Bondi Pavillion
Justice Elizabeth Evatt, Gabi Hollows
Agio Pereira and the organisers

Photographic exhibition: a major activity to be noticed is the current photographic exhibition in Bondi Pavilion promoted by Oliver Strewe and CAA (Community Aid Abroad.). Agio Pereira, Justice Elizabeth Evatt and Gabi Hollows were the guests speakers who opened the exhibition last Tuesday, 22 February. As reported in previous issues of Matebian News, this photographic exhibition covers unique events from 1942 to 1992. It will be on (in Bondi Pavilion, Bondi) for two weeks as from the 22 February. Don't miss it!!!

Two major documents: the UN Secretary-General's report on the question of East Timor has been released. It is a very important document for East Timor because it includes summaries of reports presented to the S-G by his special envoys, namely, the Special Envoy Amos Wako and Francesco Vandrel. Amos Wako went to East Timor twice; the first time was soon after the massacre of Sta Cruz (Nov 12, 1991) and the second time during the fake trial of Xanana Gusmao. Amos Wako's report was never made public by the S-G Dr Amos Wako for fear of being accused of playing politics favouring the East Timor camp. However, in the 1993 session of the UNCHR, a resolution was passed calling the S-G to table a report in this year's UNCHR session on the question of East Timor. This is why this report is now made available to the public. It has 25 pages and it accuses the Indonesian government of neglecting the calls by the UN to improve Human Rights in East Timor.

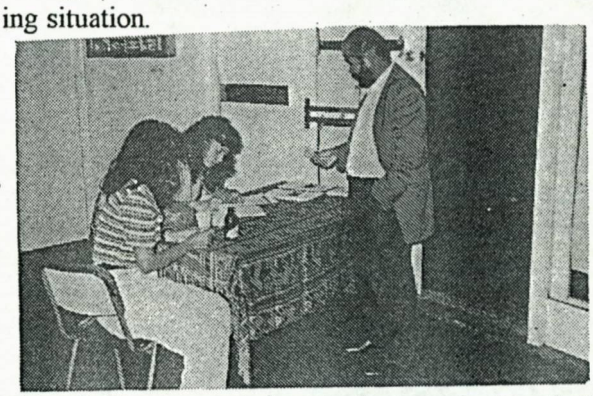
Another important document is the health report published by the magazine "Medicine and War: International Concerns on War and Other Social Violence", Vol. 9, April-June 1993. It contains 7 pages. The author, Helda Burgel, inspected many graves and concluded that the number of graves seen is impressive, and judging from the dates, the majority of the people died within a period of 15 years. She also said that, after visited quite a few places, it was clear that health conditions of the Timorese is poor indeed, and that the measures taken so far by the Indonesian government have not been translated into an improvement in the cycle of poverty in East Timor. ■



Fundraising Campaign for East Timor students: let's open another door

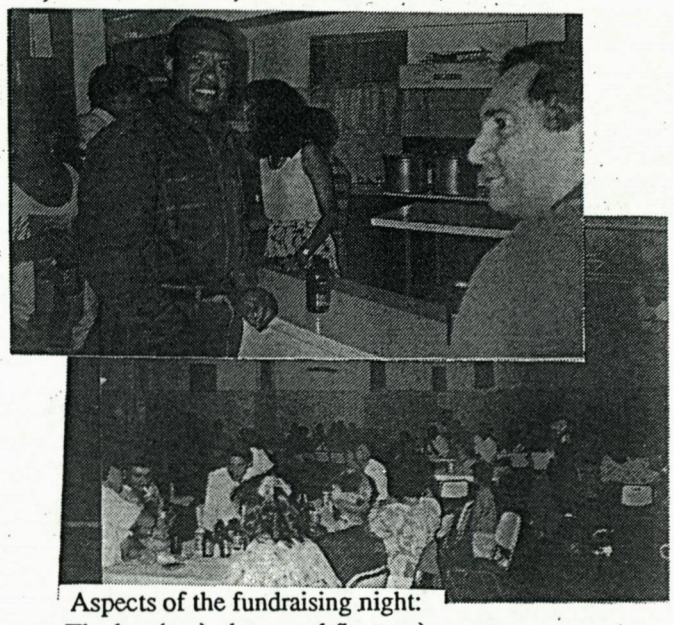
East Timor Relief Association Inc. (ETRA) has launched a fundraising campaign to support Timorese students in Indonesia. Many students of East Timor currently studying in Indonesia have been under great stress due to insufficient financial support. Their own families can not support them because of their own difficulties back home. Recently, the Indonesian government created a decree which effectively cut the scholarship of many Timorese students currently based in Indonesia. New ones may have received scholarships but the unofficial conditions attached to these scholarships literally mean buying off their freedom to express their political opinions. Because most of these students come from families with an already tremendous financial stress in East Timor, bowing to these conditions may be seen as a "minor" price to pay.

The main underline factor influencing that decision to cut the scholarships is political, although some students may have ignored their program simply because they have decided to try to escape the repression, rather then trying to continuously co-exist with it; the Timorese students in Indonesia are also well known as as very effective in their lobbying work within the Jakarta-based diplomatic bodies and foreign journalists. They have been the bridge which the Resistance in East Timor reach the outside world. As a result, they are constantly under the microscope of the Indonesian intelligence, living in a permanent politically threatening situation.



An effective support given to these students and other potential candidates for further studies in Indonesia is a priority of ETRA; it is within this humanitarian scope that ETRA is now working on this fundraising. This is, of course, not exclusive to ETRA. Other organisations with similar aims and objectives can also start their campaign wherever it is effective and send the money to the Timorese competent bodies to be used. ETRA will be pleased to assist in whatever way is necessary.

The starting point for this campaign was, as expected, within the Timorese community. The community in NSW was mobilised for a fundraising evening on the 26 of February last. More than 300 people turned up to support this patriotic move. The evening was pleasant, communicative, and informative.



Aspects of the fundraising night:
The bar (top), the crowd (bottom),
Paying the entrance free (below)

An information desk was set up to give the latest information on East Timor to those who want some information. The latest 25-pages report by the Secretary-General of the UN, Dr. Boutros-Ghali to the UNCHR, the 7-pages Health Report on East Timor by Helda Buergel, selected articles written about the latest film on East Timor by John Pilger, ETRA's information booklets, cards for Xanana Gusmao and the S-G of the UN, etc. were distributed. Books, tapes and badges were also available for sale.

The evening was enriched by the sound of the Timorese band "Timor Oan/Reggae Temptation; a well known band which blend the music of East Timor with the traditional tune of reggae, producing an unique sound clearly enjoyed by the participants. The evening was completed only by 4:00 AM of the following day. How much money was raised will be published by ETRA and copies will be made available to the general community.

More fundraising will be promoted; any financial support from individuals and organisations will be welcome. ■

WHAT'S ON

DEATH OF A NATION
The Timor Conspiracy

by John Pilger & David Munro

launch by

John Pilger

Mandolin Cinema: 6pm 10 March '94
150 Elizabeth Street, Sydney
ph: 267 1968

Valhalla Cinema: 7.30pm, 10 March '94
Glebe Point Road, Glebe
ph: 660 8050

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presents

East Timor
1942 - 1992

A Retrospective Photographic Exhibition

photo: Elaine Briere, 1974

Curated by Oliver Strewe & Jenny Groves

Bondi Pavilion Gallery

Queen Elizabeth Drive, Bondi Beach

Monday 21 February - Sunday 6 March 1994

Opening hours: 10 am - 5 pm

Seven days per week

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

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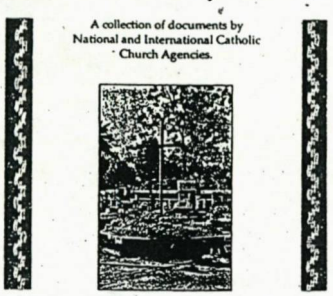
THE CHURCH AND EAST TIMOR



Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace
(Melbourne Archdiocese)

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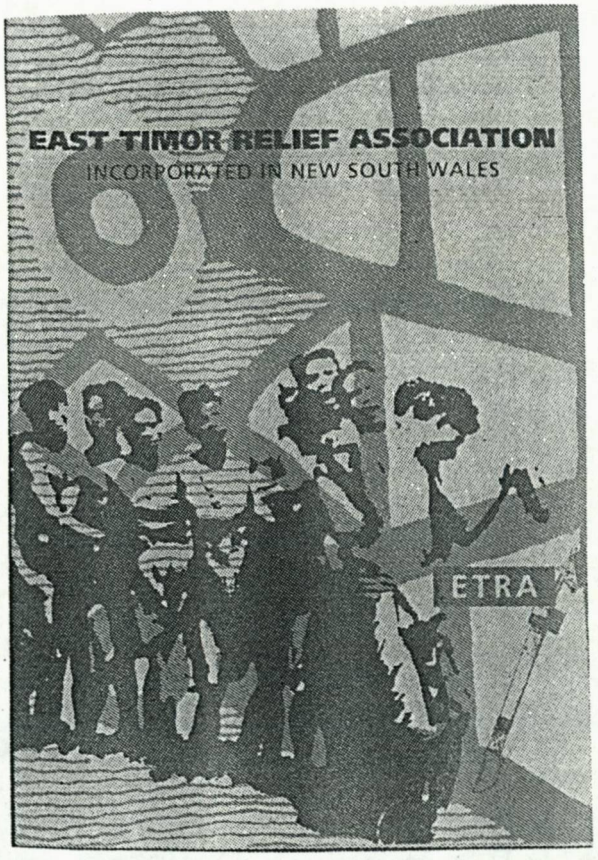

You can help East Timor
by becoming a member of
ETRA. For further information
please contact:
PH: (02) 891 58 61 fax 891 2876